

Sea Kayaking Sojourns

Drive, cruise, explore, and escape: Exploring nature by paddle provides a flesh perspective.

You're gliding inches above the sea, under your own power, with access to the shallow waterway nooks that other types of boaters can only dream about. "Kayaking has all the thrills of swimming in open water, only it's faster, easier, and you stay drier," says George Gronseth, founder of the Kayak Academy in Issaquah, Washington. It's also a great way to explore both new and familiar places. "Being 20 feet offshore gives you a whole new perspective," says Gronseth. Rookies should start with a lesson or guided trip. Here are places where you can learn the ropes or explore on your own.

Apostle Islands, Wisconsin

By the 1930s, this archipelago that hunkers off the northwestern tip of Wisconsin on Lake Superior had been heavily logged, quarried, fished, and hunted. But the 21 islands that make up the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore have since reverted back to wilderness (only Madeline Island remains inhabited year-round). Surrounded by shipwrecks and framed by red sandstone cliffs, arches, and sea caves, the islands are ideal for exploration by sea kayak. Living Adventure (www.livingadventure.com) guides half-and full-day paddles, perfect for beginners, and overnight trips from June to September.

Galápagos Islands, Ecuador

Time was, the only way to experience the wonder of the Galápagos was on a cruise ship, where the itineraries are often dictated by the location of the largest concentration of iguanas, frigates, and other species. But in recent years, the government has permitted camping on Baltra and San Cristobal islands, opening up the way for kayak/camping adventures. "You'll get a better view of wildlife this way," says Peter Grubb, founder of ROW International (www.ROWinternational.com), which guides eight-day tours of the islands. "The big difference is proximity. In a sea kayak, you control your pace. There's an intimacy that you don't have on a ship."

Georgia Coast

Back in the 1500s, Tybee Island was a refuge for pirates who wanted to keep a low profile. But today the word is out on the barrier island and other Sea Islands, such as Little Tybee, St. Simons, and Cumberland. Kayakers love the Lowcountry for its open water, tidal creeks, marshes, and strategically placed sandbars, where you can surf waves without having to crash onto the beach. Sea Kayak Georgia (www.seakayakgeorgia.com) offers lessons, half-day outings, and multi-day camping trips. Southeast Adventure Outfitters (www.southeastadventure.com) guides nature tours throughout the Sea Islands and river lowlands.

Merchant's Row, Maine

They say that if you were to stretch out the entire coastline of Maine, with its thousands of islands, it would be longer than the coastline of California. Luckily, the Maine Island Trail Association (MITA) has mapped 350 choice miles of waterway, from Cape Porpoise Harbor on the west, to Machias Bay on the east. Camping sites along the way are on public parklands and private islands, where membership in MITA (www.mita.org) is your entrance fee. Merchant's Row, an archipelago of islands halfway up the Maine coast, is a favorite of Jim Dugan, a sea-kayaking guide and MITA volunteer. "I love the smell of salt water and the spruce trees, and the sound of seals barking at you," he says. "It's pretty amazing here." Maine Island Kayak on Peaks Island (www.maineislandkayak.com) in Casco Bay can get you going with a three- or five-day fast-track camp.

Baja California, Mexico

With its warm and largely calm waters, rich ecosystem, and rugged islands, the Sea of Cortez has become a major destination for sea kayakers. Most expeditions set off from the tiny fishing village of Loreto and explore the surrounding national marine park. You'll paddle alongside porpoises, sea lions, and if you're lucky, blue whales that are lured into the narrow bay by an abundance of the krill they crave. For serious whale encounters, Magdalena Bay on the Pacific coast is one of the three Baja lagoons in the world where thousands of grey whales go to mate and calve in the winter. The whales travel 5,000 miles from their Arctic feeding grounds. Sea Kayak Adventures (www.seakayakadventures.com) leads fully outfitted trips to both spots.

CSR Learning Log for Informational Text

Name _____ Date _____

Today’s Topic _____

BEFORE READING: Preview

Brainstorm: Connections to prior knowledge

Predict: What I might learn about the topic

DURING READING: Section 1

Clunks		Fix-up Strategies			
_____	= _____	1	2	3	4
_____	= _____	1	2	3	4
_____	= _____	1	2	3	4

Gist:

DURING READING: Section 2

Clunks		Fix-up Strategies			
_____	= _____	1	2	3	4
_____	= _____	1	2	3	4
_____	= _____	1	2	3	4

Gist:

DURING READING: Section 3

Clunks		Fix-up Strategies			
_____	= _____	1	2	3	4
_____	= _____	1	2	3	4
_____	= _____	1	2	3	4

Gist:

AFTER READING: Wrap-Up

Questions: Write questions and answers.

Review: Write one or two of the most important ideas in this passage.
Be prepared to justify your ideas.